MASON'S

Coin and Stamp

COLLECTORS'

MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1867.

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VOL. I. SEPTEMBER, 1867. No. 6.

HISTORY OF COINS OF AMERICA.

The first *United States cent* coined was struck in 1787. Congress passed an act, October 16,1786, for the establishment of a Mint, and a contract having been made for coining coppers, the so-called "Franklin Cent" made its appearance. On the obverse is a sun-dial, above which the sun appears; under the dial the legend "MIND YOUR BUSINESS." Upon the left side the word *Fugio;* on the right the date, 1787. The reverse presents, in the centre of a small circle, the words, "WE ARE ONE," surrounded by the legend UNITED STATES. Around the whole are thirteen connected rings or links, representing the thirteen States. The design of this coin is said to have been the work of Franklin; but this assertion has never yet been substantiated.

There was a larger piece struck at a later period, bearing the same description as the 1787 cent, with the date (1776) composed of white metal. This piece, by many called the "Continental Currency," is, doubtless, the work of private parties, who wished to speculate on the popularity of the United States cent, and issued the large white piece as a medalet.

Massachusetts commenced coining copper cents and half-cents, by authority of Congress, in 1787. The cent bears upon the obverse the figure of an Indian standing erect, with bow in one hand and arrow in the other; upon the outer surface of the coin the legend, COMMON * WEALTH. The reverse, a large Eagle, with wings widely spread; a shield upon the breast of the bird, at top of which is the word CENT; around the eagle the legend MASSACHUSETTS; beneath the eagle the date 1787. The half-cent bears the same description, with one exception, viz: upon the shield of the One Cent piece the word CENT appears, while the other and smaller coin has the addition of HALF over the word CENT. There were a larger quantity of the Massachusetts Cents coined than half-cents, and this fact adds to the fictitious value of the small coin, making it worth more than treble the value of the cent. These coins do not date later than 1788, and there are several distinct varieties.

In 1791, the "Kentucky Cent" appeared. This, like many other colonial coins, was originated in England and circulated generally in the United States. Obverse: a hand, holding a scroll, upon which is inscribed the motto, "OUR CAUSE IS JUST;" around the outer surface the legend, "UNANIMITY IS THE STRENGTH OF SOCIETY." * Reverse: a pyramid of fifteen stars in the form of a triangle, each star bearing the name of one of the fifteen States. Around the border the words E. PLURIBUS UNUM. No date. These Kentucky coppers were evidently a private enterprise, got up for speculative purposes by some enterprising Englishman, and have become so identified with colonial coins, that, in the absence of an original Kentucky piece, it has been adopted by collectors to represent Kentucky. Other pieces of this State, dating 1796, are known, but very rare.

One variety of the Kentucky piece has

a lettered edge, marked, "PAYABLE IN LANCASTER, LONDON, or BRISTOL." Another has a plain edges. There are also slight differences in the arrangement of the devices.

[In the next number of this Magazine we shall commence with the Washington Cents (1791 and '92) and other Washington pieces; following which we will give the regular series of United States Cents and Half cents, with their rarity, numbers and value.—ED.

CURIOUS MEDALET.

Major Nichols, of Springfield, Mass, has kindly sent us a very peculiar copper medalet, dated 1578; obverse, an open cloud, with inscription in Hebrew characters; from the sky or cloud descend snakes, fire, &c, upon two prostrate and nude male figures; Reverse: Three nude male figures, with clubs, striking upward, in a threatening attitude, towards the sun, which is within a small cloud; legends, COELVM, STOLIDVS, QVI-TERRITAT, ARMIS. ARMISRUAT, COELUM, COELESTIBUS. Translation: "He, who, foolhardy, seeks often to terrify Heaven with arms, may be overthrown by the arms of Heaven."

COINS AND MEDALS.

These are admitted species of historic evidences, and as lasting ones, perhaps, beyond all others. A series of them is the most certain method of arranging a chronological tablet, and thereby preserving the data of *history*, *mythology*, *portraits*, *customs* and *art*.

For instance, there is a small Roman coin, familiar to all collectors; the obverse contains a profile head, and around it the letters AVGVS TVS: on the reverse, a Temple, with the doors closed, surrounded by the word PROVIDENTIA. The explanation is as follows, viz: A coin of Augustus Cæsar—the Temple was that of Janus, the doors of which had been opened for nearly two centuries, as emblematic of the continuance of Roman warfare with foreign countries; but on the coin the doors were closed, and with the word of thanksgiving, were symbolical of universal peace, thus proving that the coin was struck the very year in which the Saviour was born! Thus upon the one coin were illustrated the features of the second Roman Emperor, — Mythology, cessation of war,— the downfall of Brutus and Cassius,—the defeat of Anthony, and the birth of Christianity! The description of the above coin will illustrate the historical intelligence to be derived from the perusal of coins. A medal is an especial mode of recording tributary honor to individuals—literary, civil or military;—they become heirlooms in family possessions, and are transmitted from sire to son, as absolute records of their ancestors' fame. They are also struck in celebration of national events, and thence become records of people.

So assured was Napoleon of this, that a series of his medals is a complete history of his victories, from Consulate to his loss of the Empire; and that event at Waterloo was recorded by Great Britain upon her medals. Denon of France, and Wyon of England, are names as artists worthy to record the victories of Napoleon and Wellington. M. W. D.

THE LANGUAGE OF COINS.

Expert numismatists make many very fine points in the terms of distinction between the various conditions of coins. We have invariably adhered to three cardinal points or terms in describing coins, viz: "Proof," Uncirculated, and "Circulated." The "splitting of hairs," in the case of experts, creates great confusion with beginners; but as many of our readers would like to know the variety of terms known to the numismatic profession, we give them. We would remark, however, that each point to-

wards perfection adds considerable to the value of the coin, and therefore is correct in point of fictitious valuation. Here they are: SHARP. BRILLIANT PROOF; Brilliant Proof; Proof; Tarnished Proof; Uncirculated Sharp; Very Fine (or nearly uncirculated); Fine; Very Good; Good; Very Fair; Fair; Pierced; Poor; Very Poor; Very Poor Indeed; besides many other combinations and terms, such as Slightly Rubbed, Badly Worn, Corroded, Rusty, Eaten, etc. Some of our customers will be able, from this list, to know the divisions in the prices of coins.

REMINISCENCES OF A COIN COLLECTOR.—No. 3.

BY E. M., JR.

We well remember Dr. W., now known as the Oriental traveler, whose love for coins and curiosities amounted almost to a mania. So constant had the numismatic terms been used by the Doctor, that they became a part of his speech, and the most trivial remark made by him had an amusing admixture of coin terms. If he was purchasing a hat, and was asked the size, he invariably answered so many sixteenths, using the numismatic scale. One day we remember seeing the Doctor purchasing some fine peaches of a huckster on Broadway, New York, and the following dialogue passed between them:

Huckster—"Fine peaches, sir."

Dr.—"Are they *proof?*"

Huckster—"D'ye mane are they fresh? Ah! indade, sir, they jist came from the traes."

Dr.—"Uncirculated, bright red, got the natural bronze on them. You're sure they're not re-strikes?"

Huckster (bewildered) — "No, sir. They're as fine a fracstone as ye iver atc."

Dr.—"Wrap up six without bruises, and be careful and not rub them."

Upon another occasion, a dog was accidentally killed in the street, and a bystander remarked to the Doctor, sympathetically:

"Poor brute! What a shame! Splendid dog! Killed instantly!"

"Yes," replied the Doctor, "good dog, bad impression; but I must say a most *perfect die!*"

COIN TRADE.

The welcome news comes from every quarter of the Union that the coin business is flourishing beyond precedent, and gives hopeful signs of permanence. Now is the accepted time for beginners. It is said that two important sales are to take place this month in New York, two in Philadelphia, and one in Boston. Cogan, *the* A No. 1 dealer of New York, reports the coin business daily improving, and with us the business has trebled within a couple of weeks. Coins will bring a higher price the coming winter than ever before. This is our prediction.

NUMBER OF CENTS AND HALF CENTS STRUCK AT U. S. MINT FROM 1793 to 1857.

(*Prepared expressly for Coin Dealers and Collectors.*)—*Conclusion.*

Date.	Cents.	Half Cents.
1842	2,383,390	Patterns.
1843	2,428,320	"
1844	2,397,732	"
1845	3,894,804	"
1846	4,120,800	"
1847	6,183,669	"
1848	6,415,799	"
1849	4,178,500	39,864
1850	4,426,854	39,812
1851	9,889,707	147,672
1852	5,063,094	Patterns.
1853	9,641,131	129,674
1854	4,236,156	55,358
1855	1,574,829	56,500
1856	2,690,463	40,430
1857	333,456	35,180

[The Yearly Report of the Mint is made out from July to June, instead of

January to December, which accounts for errors in the number of cents and half-cents coined of the rare dates.]

THE "ONE CENT WAR."

Saint Louis has recently been overwhelmed with excitement about coins. It seems that the conductors of the street cars, instead of collecting tickets, have become coin collectors; or, in other words, collecting too many cents from the irate citizens who refuse to assist the said conductors in their efforts to complete their collection of cts. We have taken great interest in the subject of coins, and have, therefore, watched the progress of the "One Cent War" until it finally settled into a ONE CENT PEACE! Our readers will please understand that the "One Cent Piece" is not a *new issue*, but a *Peace*, simply, from the old issue! It should have been a FIVE CENT WAR, as the Directors of the railroad company have come to their "*five senses.*"

TYRIAN COINS.

BY M. W. D., M. D.

The Serpent, with the Tyrians (who adopted it from their neighbors of Egypt) was their *Agathos* demon,—or good Spirit of the country,—and was

used to illustrate any strong act of faith or friendship. It follows that two serpents were necessary to illustrate the compound act. We have seen an ancient Tyrian coin, on the reverse of which is a Serpent entwining an Egg. The representation may be translated thus: An egg is the emblem of life, and its greater size upon the coin in proportion to the serpent represents the germ of the nation's life. The serpent coiling around it presents the Good Dæmon of the country protecting the egg or nation from external injury, by its numerous embraces, the warmth of which would, also, bring it into active life.

To the left is a spiral shell. This shel also illustrates the nation of Tyre, for the spiral shell is found upon nearly all the coins of that ancient country. It was placed on those coins in honor of the discovery of the secret of the celebrated color called by the ancients, the Tyrian Dye. That renowned color was not made from any earth or mineral, but from the purple *murex*, or dye shellfish. It was first discovered by

a Tyrian, on the shores of Tyre, who, wandering with his dog, suddenly observed the mouth of his faithful companion to be enpurpled, and, upon investigation, he found that it arose from the animal's crushing between his teeth a small shellfish just then thrown upon the Tyrian beach by the waters of the Mediterranean. Improving upon the discovery, the Tyrians became so renowned for their dye, used in regal and costly mantles, that, in commemoration of the event, they placed upon their coins the shell. Nor was the original discoverer forgotten, for upon a Tyrian coin the dog is seen approaching the shell.

A TRIFLING ERROR.

In the *N. Y. Tribune* of August 3d, there appears a lengthy article, from the pen of one of the editors, entitled:

"THE MONEY OF THE UNITED STATES.

"*Among the Greenbacks*,"

containing a small error, which should be corrected before it travels the routine of the press. After alluding to the ancient coins of Rome, &c., the article contains the following:

"American money-coins must have numbered nearly 1000. The earliest was a brass penny, struck in the Bermudas in 1612 for the Virginia colony."

The Sommer Islands coins or Bermuda Pennies were *copper*, and struck in England, and not in the Bermudas.

The Islands were inhabited about 1609, when Sir George Somers was cast away upon them. In 1612, a Virginia company, headed by More, succeeded in establishing a colony upon the Islands Daniel Tucker succeeded More, when an effort was made to establish a currency, as is evident by Captain John Smith's statement, viz: "Besides meat and drink and clothes, they had for a time a certain kind of money, with a hogge on one side, in memory of the abundance of hogges which were found on their first landing."

NUMISMATIC CONVENTION.

Having been the first to propose a Convention of Coin Collectors, to be held in New York, Philadelphia or Boston, we are pleased to see that our correspondents generally coincide with our views. The advantages of such a meeting are numerous and important, and afford an opportunity to compare notes, examine unique coins or medals, suggest various improvements in the present method of collecting coins and establishing certain rules by which each member is to be governed in certain contingencies. Also to make each member a detective to discover the authors of altered and counterfeit coins.

One correspondent suggests that the Convention should be confined to the Numismatic, Historical and Archæological Associations; but we would prefer to see members chosen from each principal city or town in the United States, without distinction; or, in other words, to admit any collector, whether a novice or an expert, to take part in any discussion or move of the Convention, providing such member is chosen, after due consideration, by the various collectors residing in each city or town. Say six members from each large city, and one from each town; the remaining collectors to contribute one dollar, or less, towards the expenses of travel, &c. The Convention to issue a pamphlet Report of all proceedings, for the benefit of such collectors as take part, or aid the cause to this end.

We then propose that a subsequent International Convention be called, to assemble in Europe or America. Subscribers and coin collcetors are requested to suggest items for publication in reference to this proposed numismatic assemblage.

TO THE LADIES.

As we have a number of young lady subscribers and readers, we propose to address a few remarks to them, on the subject of matrimony as effected by numismatology.

In the first place, prefaratory, we would say that the best class of citizens is found among those who are devoted to the scientific pursuit of collecting minerals, coins, shells, autographs, stamps, &c. A young man who devotes his leisure moments to these instructive and useful employments is seldom found in the haunts of vice, and we never yet saw the name of any numismatist in the criminal reports of the newspapers.—Idleness leads to mischief; the latter to crime; therefore, it is incompatible with natural laws for a coin or stamp collector

to be a drunkard, a vagabond, or a criminal. If these premises are correctly given, and we challenge contradictory evidence, then how important it is for young ladies, matrimonially inclined, to ascertain the particular habits of their favored suitors before uttering the important and life-giving monosyllable, "Yes!"

P.S.—We omitted to say, in the above article, that the editor of this journal has a "happy family," and all are coin and stamp collectors.

SPECIMEN 15 CENT NOTES OUT.

Any subscriber wishing copies of the "new issue" of the new 15 ct. note, in advance of its regular circulation, please send address to this office. The new fractional note will not be issued generally until after the meeting of next Congress.

THE BERNE STAMP.

In the August number of this journal we inserted an article in reference to the Berne Stamp, which has elicited numerous replies. We had pretty strong evidence, before publishing the article, that the Berne Stamp did duty for a time as a Postage-stamp, although now used as a Bill, or Revenue Stamp. It bears on its face evidence of being a post-office stamp, as is apparent by the language upon the same.

We inserted the item with a view of establishing the use of the stamp for postage purposes. Our Philatelic brothers in Europe will please give us all the evidence they possess, or can obtain, in reference to this matter. We are as willing to learn as to instruct.

POSTAGE STAMPS.

Collectors of postage stamps may find the following facts, which we present for their benefit, both useful and interesting. The postage stamp had its origin in London, on the 10th of January, 1840, and for ten years England alone made use of it. It was adopted in France at the beginning of the year 1849. The Thurn-and-Taxis office introduced it into Germany in the year 1850; and now it is in use in sixty-nine countries in Europe, nine in Africa, five in Asia, thirty-six in America, and ten in Oceanica. The United States alone has upwards of fifty kinds of postage stamps Van Dieman's Land has its own stamp, as have also Hayti, Natal, Honolulu and Liberia. Of late years the collection of stamps has become a regular business, and in Europe it is so extensive as to necessitate the employment of agents and correspondents, and the sales of collections are regularly quoted in the public journals.

STAMPS.

AUSTRIA.—Profile of Francis II. to the right, in beaded circle surrounded by arabesques; beneath the circle the value is denoted in figures, followed by KR. for Kreuzers, or SLD. for Soldi, according to their employment in German or Italian provinces. The values and colors are:

2 Kr. or Sld.. ... .yellow.
3 " " ....green.
5 " " ..... pink.
10 " " .... blue.
15 " " .....light brown

Also head of Mercury to left in circle, for newspapers. Color, pale lilac.

SPAIN has issued new stamps, three of which are the following:

10 milesimas de escudo, brown.
25 milesimas de escudo, blue, centre pink.
50 milesimas de escudo, pale brown.

PRUSSIA.—This country has emitted another issue, for the use of South Germany, the value being in kreuzers. In the centre of stamp the Prussian Eagle. PREUSSEN above, and KREUZER below. Large numerals, indicating value, on each side, all enclosed in an octagonal frame.

The values and colors are

1 Kreuzer .....green.
2 " .....orange.
3 " ..... pink.
6 " .....blue.
9 " .....bistre.

CHILI has issued new stamps. The designs are similar to those previously issued, but COLON and CHILE have changed places. Small figures of value are at each upper corner represented by stars below. They are engraved and printed by the AMERICAN BANK NOTE Co

EAST INDIA.— This country has a newly-issued stamp, viz: Profile of Queen Victoria to left, enclosed by octagonal band inscribed EAST INDIA POSTAGE above, SIX ANNAS AND EIGHT PIES below, separated by florets in oblong, erect frame; spandrils reticuled, and is water-marked with an elephant's head.

A REMARKABLE STAMP COLLECTOR.

Mr. J. Faaet, of this city, commenced collecting stamps early in June last, and succeeded in getting together about 700 different stamps uncancelled, and this month purchased the well-known and valuable stamp collection known as Prof. Wyman's, of Burlington, N. J., numbering near 3000. Mr. Faaet can now be termed the champion collector of the United States. Taking into consideration the fact that this indefatigable collector is a mechanic and possessed of but limited means, his industry, energy and perseverance deserve a passing notice, being at this time well read and thoroughly posted in Philately. *Pass him around.*

FOOT STAMP.

In the July number we gave a description of a new stamp in use by the ladies. We find, by the following item, that this stamp is also used by the "colored folks," which gives us an extra color and size:

"An old negro woman, on Tuesday last, gave a letter to the mail agent on the Carolina train, at the station near Branchville, S. C., and asked him to send it for her. The agent said the letter must be stamped. The old woman became indignant, said the darkies were free, and 'Whar war de use of freeing the cullud pussons ef you didn't free de letters to?' and finally yelled out, 'How many stamps he want, eh?' The mail agent said, 'Three.' Down went the letter, and down went the old woman's heel. 'Dar! Dar! Dar! Dar's three stamps! Dat enuff, eh?' She was in angry earnest, and the bystanders were amused accordingly. The agent saw the joke, volunteered to pay the money stamp, and thus, doubly stamped, the letter was sent to its destination."

CONFEDERATE POSTAGE STAMPS.

There were eight different issues of stamps authorized by the Confederate States Government, viz.:

No. 1.—Head of Davis to right in oval; inscription above, CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA. Large rect, 5 cents, green, blue.

No. 2.—Head of Andrew Jackson to left in oval; inscription above, C. S. A. POSTAGE. Large rect, 2 cents, green.

No. 3.—Head to right in broad oval; inscription like No. 1. 10 cents, rose, blue.

No. 4.—Head of Calhoun in circle; inscription, CONFEDERATE STATES, in margin above. Rect., 1 cent, yellow, red-brown.

No. 5.—Same device, head of Davis, 5 cents, blue.

No. 6.—Head of Davis to right in oval; inscription, POSTAGE above; CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA on sides. Rect., *a*, *Ten* cents (value in words), blue; *b*, 10 cents, light-blue, dark-blue.

No. 7.—Head of Andrew Jackson in oval; inscription, POSTAGE, and C. S. in lower corners. Rect., 2 cents, lake-red.

No. 8.—Head of Washington in oval, inscription, CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA. Rect., 20 cents, green.

THE PHILATELIST.

This journal, all the way from Brighton, England, comes to our sanctum this month freighted with good things in the stamp line, and profusely illustrated with new issues of various European nations.

ANOTHER RICHMOND IN THE FIELD!

The first number of *The Stamp Journal*, published in Middletown, Conn., by A. Fountain, has been received at this office. It is issued upon the fifth of each month, and presents a neat appearance; good paper and type; four pages, double columns. Mr. Fountain is a prompt, energetic business man, with whom we have had satisfactory business dealings, and cheerfully recommend to Philatelists his little *Journal*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Traverse City, Mich., July 15, 1867.

Messrs. Mason & Co.:

Gentlemen—I am young in the stamp business, and have much to learn, but experience will teach me many a good lesson. I have been collecting coins in a small way for some years, but, like many beginners, have a great many coins of little value. I am off here in the wilderness, so far from the great cities, that my opportunities for collecting are not many, nor good. I do not know of another collector in this whole region, and to one less enthusiastic than myself, it would be discouraging. You, who have all the advantages of a residence in Eastern towns, of frequent meetings and chances for observation and research, must have a little patience with us who are in the backwoods.

The *Magazine* comes regularly, and I am *very much pleased with it.*

Hoping I have not wearied you,

I remain cordially yours,

T. T. B.

[The above letter from the Great West exhibits the true spirit of an amateur, and has the ring of genuine metal. Our young Philatelists should take courage from this communication, and persevere in the effort to complete their collections. Here, in the great centre of the stamp mart, it is not difficult to obtain almost any rare stamp; but in the "back woods," where discouragement stares one terrifically in the face, how very different! "T. T. B." is an ornament to our brotherhood, and the healthy influence such a collector exerts for the good and useful in such a wild western latitude, is almost incalculable.—ED.]

REPLIES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

P. REVERE.—The Blue Five Cent United States Stamp, with bust of Washington, that you sent us, is used for prepaying newspapers and periodicals across the Plains. There were two others, viz: Bust of Franklin, color green, 10 cents, and Bust of Lincoln, color vermilion, 25 cents. These stamps are confined to the Chicago Post-office exclusively, and are said to be the largest stamps in the world.

EUROPEAN.—Too late! The "Champion Collection" of stamps has passed into the hands of a gentleman of this city. See editorial.

C. F. H., N. Y.—As soon as you find "Mining Reports," send a copy.

D. O. W. U.—We have 1793 cent, very fine; 1804, fine; 1809, *uncirculated.*

S. W. P.—$3 at hand. 100 foreign sent.

R. W. L.—All right. Catalogue mailed.

J. L. B., MONTREAL.—Waiting patiently for the list of coins.

W. E. Woodward.— Please forward catalogue. The 1804 withheld for further examination.

E. Cushing, Houston, Texas. — Thanks. Please send us some names from the "Lone Star" latitude.

L. D. M'C., Jr.— Subscription received. Waiting for those coins. Have some fine ones for you.

Wm. S., Buffalo.—Call the collectors together, and get their opinion of the call for a Convention.

S. A. T.—Sent to you for Hill's book; also for stamps. You are not prompt; we wish it were otherwise.

L. D. McC.—Sent you medal. Will soon open the subject to which you allude.

C. P. N.—None on hand. Will remember the order.

Medalist.—Can supply you with medals 25 to 50 cents lower than usual price.

T. E. B.—Will send the catalogues.

Cohen.—Postage will be paid hereafter.

J. Frey.— Thank you for compliments. If the Magazine is "published forever," we shall consider you a *permanent* subscriber.

J. H. D.—You beat everything yet offered in the prize line.

To Correspondents.—In making inquiries about coins, &c., please enclose a stamp, or your letters will remain unanswered. Of course, these remarks do not apply to our customers.

J. H. A., Jr.—We received yours of July 18th. The coins wanted could be sent on receipt of order accompanied by cash, the coins could be returned if not satisfactory. You are too distant for any other arrangement.

D.—The coins were sent. At present we have plenty of dates, from 1814 to 1857. Dates of 1791 to 1814 are always wanted in any condition. If the higher dates are uncirculated, send them along. Sent you a Washington 1791 at $5.

T. T. B.—Regret that business demands our attention so constantly as to preclude the necessary instruction. Can send you a Gray's Stamp Instructor, 400 illustrations, at $1.

F. A. Peray, Concordia, Texas. — Awaiting your order. Did you receive the package? Will get what you require.

W. H. G.—Your piece will not answer, on account of the stars. U. S. coins should have but 13 stars. The reason is obvious.

J. W. Jr.—The design for a 10c. coin is very good, indeed, and would have ranked A No. 1 had there been a different disposition and a less number of the stars. 13 stars are more applicable to United States coins than 37. States are accumulating, and before many years the coins would be covered with starry emblems, if your plan was adopted.

G. M. P.—Your coin design ranks No. 3. Too much like our two-cent piece, and an absence of stars. In other respects very neat and pretty.

Competitor.—Acid must be left out of the question. It injures the metal. Lemon-juice is an injurious article for cleaning copper.

Book Student.—We have Dickeson's Manual, $10; Primes, $3.50; Humphries, 2 vols. (foreign coins), $5 for the 2 vols.; Snowden's Medals, $5; Snowden's United States Coins, $5. *Postage free.* Also about fifty different priced Catalogues of Sales, $1 each.

Fifteen Cent Note.—We can send you a large shield containing 39 specimens of "Fractional Currency," including two 15 cent notes, green and red backs, for $6. The 15c. note cannot be had in any other form than upon the shield, in fact there has been no positive assertion that it will be used earlier than January next. Those wishing the shields should order early, as the supply is limited.

PRIZES.

We give below the result of the Prize contest. We received a number of letters in reference to "cleaning coins," but all of the correspondents use acids in their different plans of cleansing copper coins. As we particularly stated in the August number, cleaning coins "without injury to the metal," we cannot consistently admit any plan, in competition for the fourth prize, that embraces the use of chemicals notoriously injurious to the coins:

No. 1.—Prize —A Silver Medal will be awarded to the person sending us the best Epigram on "Autographs." (Awarded to William H. Nevil, Philadelphia.)

AUTOGRAPHS.—AN EPIGRAM.

WHICH? THIS, THAT, OR THE OTHER?

What's in a name! An autograph,
An autograph a name;
A signature, subscriber, too,
The four are all the same.

No. 2 Prize.—A 1799 U. S. cent, for the best written letter on "Coins," omitting the vowels *o* and *i*. (Awarded to Rev. J. H. Dubbs, Pottstown, Pa.)

POTTSTOWN, PA., Aug 1867.

Gentlemen:

Essays that excluded several letters, were frequently prepared a hundred years past, but lately few have had the perseverance. But what has been executed may be repeated. Hence we undertake the task, and trust we may be successful.

They say that Tyre stamped metal at a very early date (700 B. C.), but these attempts must have been very rude. Early ages knew the metals, but at best they had wedges, bars and plates that they exchanged. The Pentateuch names the metals, but merely as jewelry, and as sheckels fixed by the balance. Plutarch states that sheep and cattle were generally used when exchanges were made; hence the early metal currency generally represented cattle (*pecus*), whence we deduce many present terms. They say that Theseus struck such *staters* at Athens. An extremely aged Greek type represents a turtle, and the reverse a mere *quadratum*.

The Etruscans struck base metals at a very early age. At Carthage and Sparta they even made stamped leather serve as currency. The leaden medals struck under the Cæsars were, perhaps, used as cards at the theatres.

The celebrated Petrarch gathered medals as early as 1370; but a century later, even the Netherlands had several hundred such sets. At present the number can hardly be calculated.

As many apparently early medals are false, *amateurs* are frequently puzzled.

False currency was made even at Athens and Sparta. Several celebrated engravers, three hundred years past, manufactured false medals at Padua, that are at present extremely rare. Charles W. Beeker, a German, made nearly seven hundred fraudulent, but very perfect, medals. A safe judge must be an expert, and must have handled many. We have seen an extremely early, but well-attested, medal at *the sanctum*. Lucky men, that unearthed such a veteran!

Very respectfully, J. H. D., Pastor.

No. 2.

[The 1799 cent having been declined by Rev. J. H. D., is at the disposal of the lady, who sent us the following, being the second best letter on "Coins."—ED.]

Gentlemen:

A letter carefully prepared—Cents the subject matter—may be a very easy task, and can be executed by any ably educated gentleman, but an attempt by a lady presents a queer aspect, and has led me many a strange walk between the letters and sentences. The characters the small cents present make them a feature under the U. S. M. management. Many traders prefer a *paper* rather than a *metal* value, when trade makes useful very large sums, but the cents serve a useful and valuable end when arranged by a careful gatherer under a system, where the dates are all carefully arranged.

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Reverse.—Across the centre 13 stars, arranged in the form of a cross, signifying the numerals 10; the centre star upon a Liberty Cap; at the right and left sides of cross the capitals U. S.; top and bottom of the cross TEN—CENTS. Upon the upper margin a shield; the whole surrounded by a wreath.

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